

To: Progeess, Christina[Progeess.Christina@epa.gov]; Hanley, Jim[Hanley.James@epa.gov]
From: Peterson, Cynthia
Sent: Thur 8/20/2015 1:49:25 PM
Subject: RE: Email to SMAG re: stand-down at Standard Mine

Christina,

I think you did a great job! I have no suggestions.

Cynthia

Cynthia Peterson

Community Involvement Coordinator

Public Affairs and Community Involvement

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VIII

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From: Progeess, Christina
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2015 3:13 PM
To: Peterson, Cynthia; Hanley, Jim
Subject: Email to SMAG re: stand-down at Standard Mine

Jim and Cynthia,

Below is the email I intend to send to the SMAG group later this week informing them of the stand down. Please feel free to add or revise as needed:

Hello SMAG members,

Most of you are probably aware that on August 5, 2015, EPA was conducting an investigation of the Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado, to:

- assess the on-going water releases from the mine,
- treat mine water, and
- assess the feasibility of further mine remediation.

While excavating above the old adit, pressurized water began leaking above the mine tunnel, spilling about three million gallons of water stored behind the collapsed material into Cement Creek, a tributary of the Animas River.

There are many differences between the known conditions of the underground workings at Standard Mine and the unknown conditions at the Gold King that make it unlikely that a similar sized event would occur at Standard Mine. However, there are also some similarities between the two sites, namely the existence of water behind the collapse within Level 1 workings and the need to intercept those workings and remove the water in order to design and construct a flow-through bulkhead in Level 1. EPA is very concerned about what happened at the Gold King and very interested in ensuring the same thing does not occur to threaten the Town of Crested Butte's drinking water or the ecology of the Coal Creek and Slate River watersheds.

Out of an abundance of caution and to help reduce the risk that a similar (albeit much smaller) release may occur at the Standard Mine, EPA has suspended work at the Standard Mine while it conducts a root cause analysis of the incident at the Gold King Mine. The Standard Mine management team is working to collect water level measurements of the water behind the collapse in Level 1 and determine appropriate sizing for secondary containment of the discharge and treatment of the water. The site management team is also developing a plan to safely intercept the Level 1 workings with the new tunnel and draw down/treat the water to facilitate completion of the Level 1 rehabilitation and bulkhead design. EPA plans to share this document with the SMAG once it is available and welcomes review by the SMTAG Technical Advisors. The team plans to brief Town Council on these plans at the Town Council meeting on Sept 8th.

It is uncertain how long work will be suspended at the Standard Mine. The site team is working diligently with EPA management to provide all the necessary data to EPA headquarters in an effort to restart work as soon as possible. At this point it looks like the soonest work would be able to start up again is likely to be in a week or two. Once

the site team has a better understanding of the duration of the suspension, we will inform the SMAG of the implications to the overall cleanup schedule.

Please contact myself or Jim Hanley (cced above) if you have any questions. We'll do our best to answer any questions we can and provide what information we have about this process and estimated timeline. Thanks.

Christina Proge

EPA Superfund Project Manager

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